



# THE COMMUNICATOR

Grant County Employee Newsletter

Volume 8, Issue 2  
April 2010

## *In this quarter's issue...*

Spring into fitness and savings  
Direct Deposit...  
Out of sight out of mind

Fitness Opportunity  
Wisconsin goes Smoke-Free  
\$10 Office Visit Co-pay Receipts  
Service Year Anniversaries  
Policy on Disclosure and Reporting...



## Submitted by Joyce Roling, Personnel Director

### *Spring into fitness and savings.....*

Health and fitness go hand in hand. With the budget constraints that counties are experiencing, it is important for all of us to see how costs can be reduced. Reducing our health insurance costs can be easier than many think. Here's how: We have all heard of the importance of prevention. The concept is to take care of your health now to prevent illnesses or injuries later. The results equal less costs for medical care, which in turn, means less claims experience, which means less premium for health insurance. Every bit counts. With that being said, read further on fitness and smoking cessation opportunities.

### *Direct Deposit of paychecks can save money, too!....*

Grant County is encouraging all employees to take advantage of the direct deposit option of their paycheck. This saves the county money through time and the cost of physically printing the "checks". There are six departments in the county where all employees have chosen to enroll in the direct deposit program. Yeah!

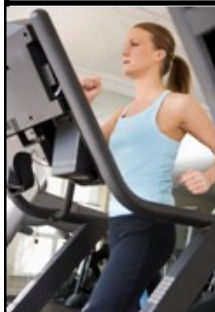
The advantages are numerous; the best part is that your pay is electronically deposited in your account on pay-day! It is safe, convenient, and easy as 1-2-3.

- 1 – Fill out a form telling us where to send your money (Call Finance or Personnel for a form)
- 2 – Attach a voided check or savings deposit slip
- 3 – Return it to your payroll designee

### *Out of sight out of mind...*

It is a good idea to review policy books from time to time as a reminder of current policies and procedures; especially if you do not deal with them on a day to day basis. Starting with this newsletter, we will be printing a different policy from the Grant County Employee Handbook in each issue.

Attached you will find a policy on Disclosure and Reporting Suspected Unlawful Conduct. This is found on page 61-A of the Grant County Employee Handbook. In a nutshell, this policy explains what to do if you see unlawful conduct happening in your workplace, such as fraudulent bookkeeping, embezzling, theft, misappropriation of funds, and any other activity prohibited by law.



## Fitness Opportunity

At no cost to the county, Lancaster, Fennimore, and Prairie du Chien Fitness has approved Grant County to be a Corporate Member. This means that if any Grant County Employees join or have joined already, they will be able to get the monthly fee at a discount. Employees who want to take advantage of this

just need to get a form from the County's Personnel Office, complete it, and submit it to the fitness center. Those who

are already a member will have their monthly fee adjusted to the lower rate and those who are joining, will get the lower rate. Also, as a reminder, Dean Health Plan also pays towards the fee for fitness programs. Employees who have Dean Health Plan should check with customer service to make sure they get reimbursement. Should you have any questions regarding this, please contact the County's Personnel Office. Employees that have questions regarding their health and fitness plans should contact their medical doctor. You may also contact Carol Thole from the Health Department at [cthole@co.grant.wi.gov](mailto:cthole@co.grant.wi.gov) for other information.

## **Wisconsin goes Smoke-Free on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

Submitted by Carol Thole, Assistant Coordinator, Southwest Alliance for Tobacco Control (SATC)

The State of Wisconsin is joining its neighboring states in our passing of the Smoke-Free Law that will take effect this July 5th. This new legislation requires organizations to develop and implement smoke-free policies and worksites. Ultimately these new policies will save lives and money. It is known that stricter smoke-free policies reduce exposure to second hand smoke and ultimately reduces the overall number of smokers. This results in healthier people and many thousands of dollars saved. For example, according to the Free and Clear smoking cessation organization, studies show that each tobacco user costs employers on average \$15 per day in excess medical claims and lost productivity over their non-tobacco using counterparts.

Let's put these numbers into perspective. Suppose 20% (which is the state's average smoking rate) of Grant County's 600 county employees smoke, that equates to about 120 smokers. However, this number could be high so let's speculate that only half or 60 employees actually smoke. If one figures 60 multiplied by \$15 multiplied by 260 days this will equal \$234,000 (or about \$3,900/ employee) in lost productivity and medical costs. As you can see the costs add up quickly. If you currently smoke and would like to improve your health and save money but need help in quitting smoking please contact Carol Thole @ [cthole@co.grant.wi.gov](mailto:cthole@co.grant.wi.gov) or 723-1624. Free and Clear and the Wisconsin Quit Line also offer free cessation materials and resources.

**Anyone wishing to have a specific subject discussed in a future newsletter may contact Joyce Roling at 723-2045.**

### **\$10 Office Visit Co-pay Receipts**



The Personnel Office will be accepting reimbursement request forms on the following dates for 2010 office visits: April 12th, July 12th, October 11th, and January 17th (of 2011). Payment will be made within fifteen days after the request deadline or as soon as reasonably possible. Please contact the Personnel Office with any questions.

### **Service Anniversaries (5 year increments)**

Grace Laufenberg, 30 years on April 1st

Gene Chapman, 25 years on June 17th

Alan Neises, 25 years on June 17th

Lori Vesperman, 25 years on June 17th

Terry McCartney, 20 years on April 2nd

Michael Stelpflug, 20 years on April 9th

Brian Bierman, 20 years on April 23rd

Douglas Vesperman, 20 years on April 23rd

Peggy Soden, 20 years on April 28th

Terri Irish, 20 years on May 14th

Kevin Lange, 20 years on May 21st

Cecilia Fishnick, 20 years on June 18th

Bonny Lenz, 15 years on May 15th

Connie Miles, 15 years on May 22nd

Bradley Hood, 15 years on May 31st

Carole Sturmer, 15 years on June 25th

LeaAnne Smith, 10 years on April 3rd

Judy Raisbeck, 10 years on April 12th

Maradith McQuillan, 10 years on April 17th

Kimberly Lolwing, 10 years on April 18th

Madelyn Foyt, 10 years on April 19th

Bradley Wells, 10 years on May 21st

Penny Hill, 10 years on May 23rd

Natalie Yager, 10 years on June 12th

Tonya White, 10 years on June 23rd

David Lambert, 5 years on April 8th

Jo Ann Brinkman, 5 years on April 12th

Adam Day, 5 years on May 15th

Gerald Staskal, 5 years on May 17th

Cory Burgess, 5 years on June 6th

Carol Thole, 5 years on June 20th



***Congratulations on reaching these milestones!  
Thank you.***

## **Disclosure And Reporting Suspected Unlawful Conduct**

Grant County encourages and expects its employees to immediately disclose to appropriate County Officials any and all information, which an employee reasonably believes to show unlawful conduct by the County, its officers, employees or agents, whenever the employee comes into possession of such information. Unlawful conduct includes fraudulent bookkeeping, embezzling, theft, misappropriation of funds, safety and health violations, discrimination and any other activity prohibited by law.

The purpose of the policy is to allow Grant County the opportunity to investigate the alleged unlawful conduct, determine the veracity of the information submitted, notify enforcement authorities when appropriate, and take corrective action as required. Grant County has an affirmative obligation to the general public and its employees to take immediate action when circumstances warrant.

If a Grant County employee has information which he/she reasonably believes to show that the County, its officers, employees or agents are engaged in unlawful conduct or activities, that employee has an affirmative duty to report or disclose that information to Grant County so corrective measures can be instigated immediately for the County's protection.

The report or disclosure should be made in writing and submitted in confidence directly to the Grant County Personnel Director and a copy of the original document is to be retained by the reporter.

NOTE: If the Grant County Personnel Director is the source of the alleged unlawful activity, then a written disclosure should be made directly to the County Board Chair. The Personnel Director or the County Board Chair shall forward the employee's report to appropriate agents of the county for confidential review and investigation.

The report may be submitted on anonymous basis if the person so desires. However, an investigation of unspecified wrongdoing or broad allegations will not be undertaken without verifiable evidentiary support. Because investigators are unable to interview anonymous reports, it may be more difficult to evaluate the credibility of the allegations and therefore, less likely to cause an investigation to be initiated.

Employee reports or disclosures made in good faith by any Grant County employee under this policy will be protected from any adverse employment action, which could be associated with the disclosure. Malicious allegations may result in disciplinary action.

This policy shall not be construed or implemented in any manner which would impermissibly restrict any public employee's protected constitutional right to speak freely as a private citizen on his or her own time about matters of public concern. Grant County reserves all rights inherent in its authority to apply this policy as it deems necessary to efficiently and effectively conduct this lawful business of County government.

(approved 9/16/08)

HEALTH AND FITNESS



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- AEROBICS

BIKING

CARDIOVASCULAR

CESSATION

CHOLESTEROL

DANCING

DIABETES

DIET

ENDURANCE

EXERCISE

FITNESS

GARDENING
- HEALTHY

HEART RATE

HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

HIKING

JOGGING

MOTIVATION

NUTRITION

PERSONAL TRAINER

PILATES

PREVENTION

STRENGTH

SWIMMING
- WALKING

WEIGHT

WEIGHT LOSS

WELLNESS

WII FIT

WORKOUT

